

Fire Wardens Meet in Heber

19 June 1986

Safety precautions are at the top of the list of skills Utah Fire Wardens learned this week at the Utah Natural Resources annual training session, held at the Wasatch Middle School. Dick Klason, Assistant Director of Field Operations, said Heber is an excellent location for instruction because of the closeness of areas where they can practice in the field what they learn in the classroom.

The students, including full-time professionals and temporary summer employees, studied fire suppressing tactics, fire organization, how to use hand tools and how to analyze fires in order to be able to bring them under control in the shortest possible time. Past, as well as current weather, steepness of slopes and whatever is fueling the fire effects how it should be fought.

Students got hands-on firefighting experience in the safety of the classroom, using a large-screen, video simulator. Four rear projectors simulate the fire scene and change the picture according to plans and decisions made by the student in control.

The weather service advises that this summer will be warmer than normal with normal precipitation. Because the last several summers have been unusually wet, there is a lot of plant growth, especially undergrowth, which is a serious hazard. One thousand acre fires are not unusual. Klason encouraged the public to cooperate in preventing and reporting fires. Even if people think they can get a fire under control, it is better to report it immediately to the Highway Patrol or local Sheriff, who will relay the message to the proper unit in that jurisdiction. Firefighters would rather answer a few calls where they find they are not needed than to be called after a fire has gotten completely out of control because of a delay.

Klason emphasized that people must accept their responsibilities to prevent fires, like being sure that campfires are out before leaving them and dousing cigarettes in proper containers rather than dropping them on the

ground. Equipment that requires mufflers must have mufflers which work properly or they can emit sparks which may cause a fire. And youngsters must be prevented from playing with matches.

If a fire has begun, while one person is reporting it, others may be able to bring it under control by beating it with rags or clothing, or shoveling dirt on it, if there is not enough water available.

Library Plans Okayed

The library board approved architect Bill Richardson's plans, including some minor changes, for the new Wasatch County Library addition, on May 23rd.

The county's application for a grant for \$90,000 was turned down by the Mountainlands Association of Governments but there is still \$92,000 set aside, which is enough to build the addition. The faculty can be completed and furnished during the next year or two with funds provided by the mill levy.

The committee recommended

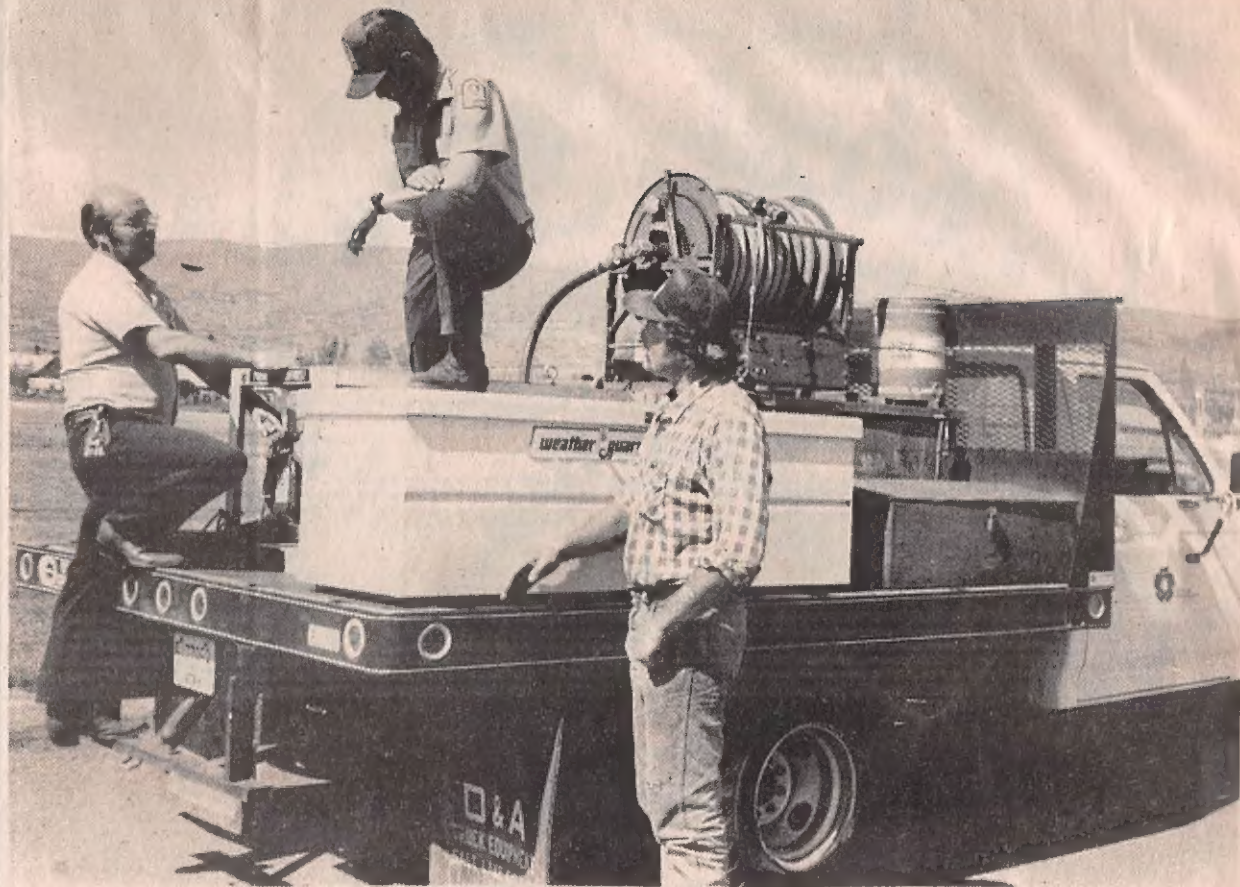
that the commission release the plans for bids immediately and open them in two weeks. Construction can then begin by the first of July and completed in ninety days. A model of the structure is on display at the library and a slide presentation is available from Clyde Muir.

The Utah State Library Commission expects to have \$200,000 in new funds and on April 15th Wasatch County filed an intent to apply for a share. There is no indication, at this point, when the funds will become available.

made by the student in control. Klason said it is very realistic and many people become so intense that they forget it is only a simulation.

Fire Wardens drive one-ton trucks, carrying 200 gallons of water, enough to fight a fire for 30 to 40 minutes. They also carry equipment which will draft water from other sources like watering ponds and creeks, and can replenish the supply in 10 to 15 minutes. Some are equipped with compressors and a solution that is mixed with the water to produce a foam, extending the effectiveness of the water. The average fully-equipped firefighting truck costs over \$20,000.

The firefighting program is financed by state, federal and local monies all of which are being cut back this year. Therefore, Klason urged class members to try to find economical ways of accomplishing what must be done while continuing to maintain past success. He was pleased to announce that Utah was able to send local firefighters out of state, under contract, to help fight major fires, and he hopes to be able to continue the practice.



Utah fire wardens, in Heber this week, received instructions to update their skills with the equipment

on Utah Natural Resources fire trucks, worth over \$20,000 each.